

tion of picture and sense. The more words, the more is hidden, the fewer words, the more is supplemented by imagination, i.e., expressed, as a tune of a few notes is bound to be more expressive (because it is "catchy") than a whole sonata. It is a fact that that is most effective which is *not* (either partly or wholly) expressed, but is left to the imagination. The impressiveness of silent nature rests upon this principle.

I have to utter another warning. The great danger of any study is to treat its object as independent of man. We speak of the meaning of a word, of the change of grammatical forms, of the function of cases, etc., and we forget that it is not the word which has the meaning, nor the form which changes, but that all these things are phenomena occasioned by subconscious changes in the mental habits of man. We have to study them, if we want to account for the phenomena of philology; just as in religion, philosophy or the study of outward expressions of mental life we must consider the condition of *mind* behind these expressions. It is nonsense to say "Varuna" develops, Mitra merges into Varuna, etc. And when we look at these things psychologically we shall find that there is *no* development or change at all, it is only an apparent change of the expression.

There is one branch of philology which is, or rather was, supposed to solve the riddle of the origin of language and ultimately the secrets of the human mind as expressed in terms of mythology and religion. It was in Max Müller's time that this was specially emphasized—the science of *etymology* which was to give us the "true word," that is, the real meaning of a word. We have now become more careful, especially after finding that there is no *real* meaning of a word, but that *all* meaning (i.e., of the word alone) is *figurative*. I may repeat myself a little in the following remarks, but I shall risk that in the face of the importance of the problem in question.

What is a word or term? It is an expression of impression and feeling which is not based on logic, but on all kinds of psychological relations as they crop up in the mind. The understanding of a word does not give us any ultimates. From words alone we cannot even gather the right idea; for example, *Nirvana* is a negative expression, but the idea is positive, and the negation is only a psychological variance of a position, in effect of equal value.

The etymological craze is to be compared to the concealment of the thing by its name, so frequent in ordinary life, and the illusory notion of people that they have discovered all the secrets of the thing when they know the *name* of it. Instead of leaving the name alone they do not rest until they know it⁽¹⁾ and are satisfied with this superficial description of the thing, whereas in reality they are not one step further in the knowledge of the thing.

I repeat: the name or term does not tell us anything about the "sense" or meaning of the word, i.e., the value and purpose of the thing, as the word "understand" does not in the least show by its

⁽¹⁾ Is this not an innate human feeling regarding the *true* names of things and trying to know that name with wrong motives and methods we fail?—Eos.